

The Worldwide Moravian Unity

Moravians have brothers and sisters all over the world. We experience this firsthand when we celebrate worship together with brothers and sisters from other countries. This is not only a matter of course for us, but also a component of our faith.

Tracing its origins to 1457, our denomination is truly an international church, with congregations in North America, the Caribbean, Central America, South America, Africa, and Europe, in addition to specialized ministries in Palestine, India, and Nepal. Moravians have a reputation for bringing the gospel of Christ to people in places where others were either unwilling or unable to go. Moravian history is a story of missionaries going above and beyond to bring the Word of God to the world.

The Worldwide Unity is how Moravians, or the Unitas Fratrum, organize the Worldwide Moravian church. The whole Moravian church is broken into provinces. Provinces of the Unitas Fratrum are found in many areas of the world and are among many races and of many languages. The provinces of this worldwide Unity thus offer a wide variety of economic, social, and political development. Yet all are one, without distinction, in their membership in the Unity.

The Unity Synod in 2009 placed these provinces into two categories – Unity Provinces and Mission Provinces – based on the stage of their development toward self-governance and sustainability. The categorization is based on the level of independence of the province. Unity Province implies a total level of independence, although many have covenant relationships with other provinces or mission agencies from which they apply for support of different projects. Mission Province implies a partial level of supervision from a Unity Province, and Mission Area implies full supervision by a Unity Province. When a Mission Area becomes a Mission Province, the “Supervising Province” becomes an “Accompanying Province”. The shift in the relationship signals a greater level of independence and more autonomy in governance, theological training, etc.

UNITY PROVINCES

There are 25 Unity Provinces, listed in alphabetical order below. Dates in parentheses indicate the foundational year.

Alaska (1885)

America – Northern Province (1741)

Includes the Eastern District, the Western District, and the Moravian Church in Canada

America – Southern Province (1753)

Costa Rica (1941)

*Czech Republic Province (1457)

D.R. Congo (2005)

Eastern West Indies (1732)

Includes Antigua; Barbados; St. Kitts; Tobago; Trinidad; and St. Croix, St. John, and St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands; with Outreach Areas of Grenada, St. Maarten, and Tortola

European Continental (1727)

Includes Albania, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Latvia, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Switzerland

Great Britain (1742)

Includes England and Northern Ireland

Guyana (1835)

*Honduras Province (1930)
Jamaica & Cayman Islands (1754)
Malawi (2007)
Nicaragua (1849)
South Africa (1737)
Suriname (1735)
**Tanzania – Eastern Province (2007)
**Tanzania – Lake Tanganyika Province (2005)
**Tanzania – Mbozi Province (2021)
**Tanzania – Northern Province (2007)
**Tanzania – Rukwa Province (1986)
**Tanzania – Southern Province (1891)
**Tanzania – Southwestern Province (1978)
**Tanzania – Western Province (1897)
Zambia (1989)

*In the Czech Republic and Honduras, splits occurred within the churches after charismatic revivals. Non-charismatic minorities formed their own bodies, but both sides remained connected to the international church. The minority communities are listed as Mission Provinces.

**Tanzania is divided into so many provinces because of the size of country and the number of people in the church. The “Moravian Church in Tanzania” coordinates the work in the nation.

MISSION PROVINCES

There are six Mission Provinces; dates in parentheses indicate the foundational year.

Burundi (2014) – accompanied by Tanzania, Western Province
Cuba (1997) – accompanied by America, Southern Province
Czech Mission (2002) – accompanied by European Continental Province
Honduras Mission (2012) – accompanied by Nicaragua Province
Labrador (1771) – accompanied by America, Northern Province
South Asia (2023) – accompanied by Great Britain Province

MISSION AREAS

New areas of mission outreach within a Province as well as new mission endeavors in places where the Moravian Church has not already been ministering are defined and approved by the Unity Board as Mission Areas. As of September 2024, there are 15 Mission Areas:

Angola – supervised by D.R. Congo
Belize – supervised by Honduras Province
D.R. Congo, Eastern South Kivu – supervised by Tanzania, Lake Tanganyika Province
French Guyana – supervised by Suriname
Garifuna – supervised by Honduras Province
Haiti – supervised by Jamaica & Cayman Islands and Eastern West Indies Provinces
Kenya – supervised by Tanzania, Western Province
Peru – supervised by the America, Northern Province & Board of World Mission
Rwanda – supervised by Tanzania, Western Province
Sierra Leone – supervised by America, Southern Province & Board of World Mission

Tanzania, Iringa – supervised by Tanzania, Western Province
 Tanzania, Ruvuma – supervised by Tanzania, Southern Province
 Tanzania, Central South – supervised by Tanzania, Western Province
 Uganda – supervised by Tanzania, Western Province
 Zanzibar – supervised by Tanzania, Eastern Province

Prospective Mission Areas: Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Ethiopia, Korea, Mozambique, Myanmar, and Zimbabwe.

UNITY UNDERTAKINGS:

There are also two Unity Undertakings which are supported by the entire Unitas Fratrum.

Star Mountain Rehabilitation Center, Ramallah, Palestine – Star Mountain Rehabilitation Center (SMRC) contributes to securing a life of dignity for persons with intellectual disabilities through rehabilitation and training, integration and inclusion, awareness building, and community mobilization based on love, dignity, justice, and equality. (Supervised by the European Continental Province)

Unity Archives, Herrnhut, Germany – The Unity Archive in Herrnhut is the archive of the central institutions of the worldwide Moravian Church and the Continental European Unity Province. It was founded in 1764 at the first general synod after Zinzendorf's death with its location in Zeist.

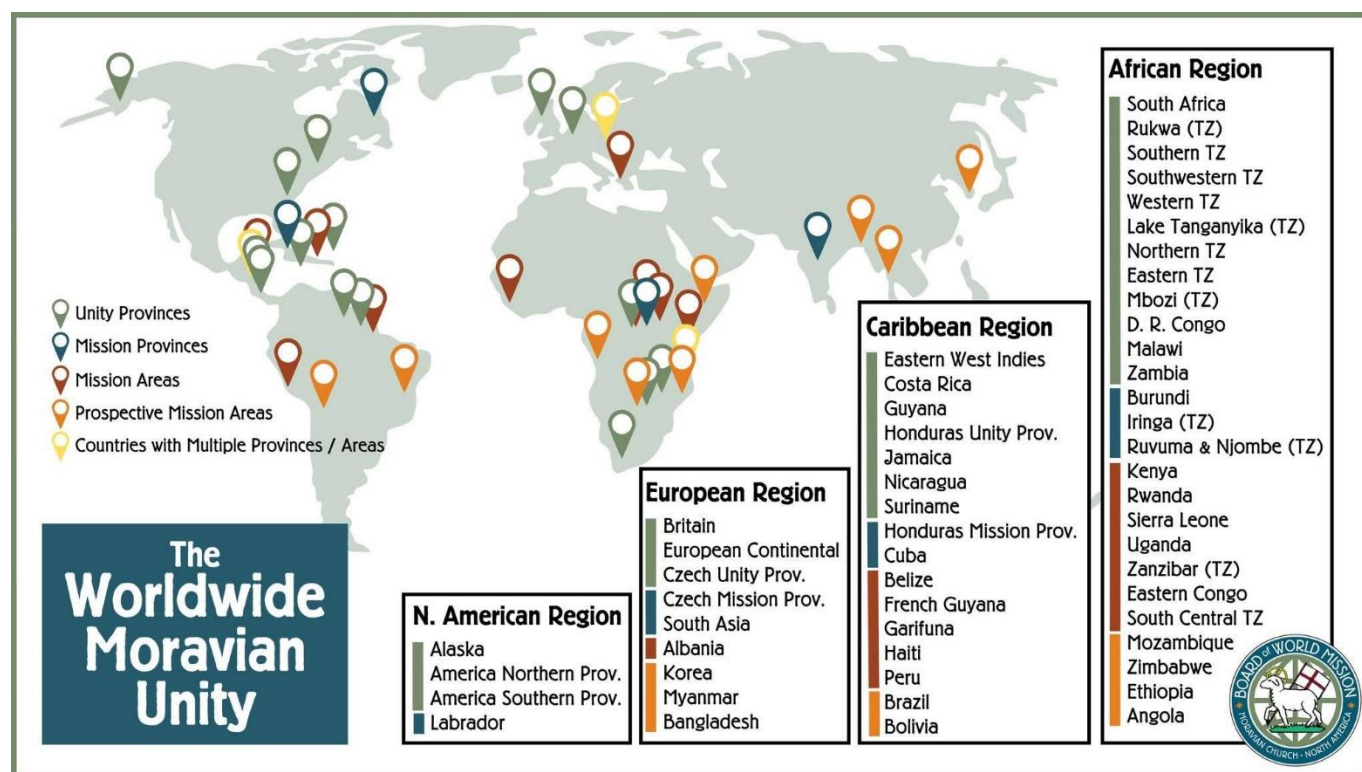


Image Source: Board of World Mission, Moravian Church in America.

Statistics Source: Unity Statistics 2024 from the Moravian Mission Society in Germany by Niels Gärtner, Bielefeld 12.09.2024. The data comes from the provincial reports to the 2023 Synod of Unity. Where no data was available, older data were used.

Other Sources: Board of World Mission – Worldwide Unity (<https://www.moravian.org/mission/worldwide-unity/>); Moravian Archives Network (<https://moravianarchives.net/>); and Wikipedia – Moravian Church (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moravian_Church#Organization).